

The Southwester

www.swdc.org

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March 2009

Circulation 12,000

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Published by The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, Inc. — a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational corporation. Leave your message at 202-554-8560 or thesouthwester@yahoo.com

SWNA Meets Mon. Feb. 23 to Celebrate Black History Month

By Peter Atlee

This month SWNA will continue the celebration of Black History Month that it started last month with a presentation from Dr. Dorothy Height. This month, we have invited City Council Chairman Vincent Gray to be our headline speaker, and we also hope to hear from a gospel choir, see an African dance group, and experience displays put together by local students. The meeting will also include a brief update on our Call Box Project and announcements regarding the upcoming SWNA elections.

The meeting will take place at 7:30pm on Monday, February 23, 2009 at St. Augustine's Church (6th St and M St SW). We hope to see you there.

Civil Rights Pioneer Addresses SWNA

Adapted from www.swdcblog.com

Recently Dr. Dorothy Height, civil and women's rights pioneer and long-time Southwest resident, captivated over 200 people when she spoke at the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly community meeting. She shared stories of her work during the Great Depression for New York City's Welfare Department, memories of her first encounter with a very young Martin Luther King, Jr., and her final assessment of a few presidents she has known.

But these weren't just isolated reminiscences; her discussion captured the full arc of the civil rights struggle and the women's movement, over seventy years worth, because she was always at the center of both. After listening to her, we felt as if we had heard the story of the 20th century, told by a very charming narrator, who is recipient of the congressional Gold Medal, author of *Open Wide The Freedom Gates*, and a long-time Southwest resident. She honored us with her presence as she spoke of her 96 years of life dedicated to others.

One of the highlights of her talk was a reflection on President Barack Obama's inauguration, where she was honored to be present on the platform in front of the Capitol. She called it a new beginning for our country. In a

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Mayor Adrian Fenty Guest Speaker at Jan. SWNA

By Andy Litsky

Mayor Adrian Fenty addressed bus idling and pollution, community garden space and help in getting a crossing guard at Jefferson Middle School, among other issues, in his first appearance before a major Southwest community meeting since taking office. As he entered the sanctuary of St. Augustine's Church for the Jan. 26 SWNA meeting, he was greeted warmly by the large crowd filling the sanctuary also there to hear from civil rights legend and Southwest neighbor, Dr. Dorothy Height.

Introduced by SWNA President Marge Maceda, the Mayor provided a brief preamble prior to an energetic Q & A session, touching on a number of projects where his administration has had a focus. He stated he was particularly proud of his road repaving program, enhanced recycling efforts, moves to bring more District services online, and continuing the Williams legacy of enhancing professionalism within the District government workforce.

The audience welcomed his praise of popular Police Commander Dave Kamperin for his work in the community and he announced that the new First District MPD headquarters will be ready to open in the old Anthony Bowen School early this spring. But while the Mayor touted his administration's focus on developing a "state-of-the-art juvenile justice facility at Oak Hill," and cited statistics showing how First District violent crimes have dropped, in his one disappointing omission he did not address recent violent crime in Southwest that even The Washington Post — not exactly a leader in local news coverage — has seen fit to mention prominently in the news and editorial pages.

The Mayor's prepared remarks concentrated on the positive. Citing a major focus on new economic development now underway in Southwest and Near SE, he acknowledged that it "has presented certain challenges" but pledged to continue to work with the community on issues such as traffic and parking. "Without any question, there's a lot of great economic development happening, and our administration is going to continue to make sure that the SW Waterfront and Waterside Mall and the other great projects surrounding the baseball area all stay on track." Fenty stressed that each of these projects will be great economic engines not only providing new residential housing and public gathering places but also increased employment, shopping, dining and recreation opportunities for current residents.

Fenty beamed as he spoke of the Obama administration, then, only five-days-old. An early endorser, the Mayor waxed enthusiastically about the energy that Team Obama has brought to Washington and predicted that the new administration will bring a boom in tourism, DC's second leading source of revenue and employment. He's already spoken with the White House about how they can partner



Mayor
Fenty &
Dr. Dorothy
Height at
the SWNA
meeting.
(photo by
Perry Klein)

to address two issues close to the President's heart - education and homelessness.

Nancy Masterson opened up public questions about the nexus between air quality and the proliferation of tour buses. The Mayor stated that "We have a no idling law on the books that we could enforce better," and that we should be "proactively thinking about better places for tour busses to go far away from residential neighborhoods." As planning proceeds on the SW Waterfront, we need to ensure that intent is translated into action.

Commissioner David Sobelsohn asked the Mayor for help from the city to enforce Community Benefits Agreements negotiated with developers by the ANC. The Mayor directed him to work with the Deputy Mayor's Office of Economic Development to help work out arrangements for how that could be best accomplished.

"Absolutely," the Mayor responded emphatically when Grace Daughtridge inquired whether we could obtain police or crossing guards to help assist with after school dismissal at Jefferson MS. Now that DDOT has hired more than 30 new crossing guards, he said that "... hopefully we've got plenty enough to put over by Jefferson." The Mayor directed his Ward Six neighborhood outreach staffers, Chris Taylor and Forest Hayes, to work with Daughtridge on this request.

Rev. Ruth Hamilton briefed the Mayor on the work being done by the SE/SW Community Benefits Coordinating Council (CBCC) and urged that he embrace the goals set forth by the community as part of that effort, as have Councilmembers Tommy Wells and Kwame Brown.

Public and community garden space was an issue raised by a resident living across from the new baseball stadium. She asked if it would be possible to designate such an area in Southwest as in other areas in the city. "Let's put something together," said Fenty, "as long as the community buys into it, we'll make it happen."

ANC Commissioner Ron McBee and Dr. Beryl Rice, Chairman of the SWNA Youth Activities Task Force, expressed concerns about coordination of after school programs

at DCPS and DC Parks and Recreation. In response to Dr. Rice's question about how one might become involved in that effort, the Mayor urged interested residents to contact local school principals at Jefferson and Amidon-Bowen and the facility manager of Greenleaf Recreation to express interest in volunteering their expertise.

It's always good to end on a high note and new Southwest resident, NBC 4 reporter Tom Sherwood, finished up the questioning by asking the Mayor whether the economic slowdown might impact progress at Waterfront (Waterside Mall). The Mayor assured the group that he had spoken with the Forest City management and that their financing was solid and they were "on track for a ribbon cutting soon." And that's something we all can look forward to in the spring of 2010.



**HOLIDAY INN
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ONE FREE -
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Mail to: thesouthwester@yahoo.com

Circulation – 12,000
202/554-8560

Send all story material, camera ready ads and photos via email to:
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Deadline for next edition, ads or text:
Wednesday, March 4, 2009.

Display Advertising Rates
The Southwester carries four columns, each 2½" wide. Each page has a printed area of 10 x 13¾".

Black and White

Sixteenth page (2½ x 3 7/16")	\$ 50
Eighth page (2½ x 6 7/8")	\$ 90
Quarter page (5 x 6 7/8")	\$170
Half page (10 x 6 7/8")	\$300
Full page (10 x 13¾")	\$550

The Southwester has no classified ads.

Color

In addition to the prices listed above, full process color ads pay an additional \$100 for a half page or smaller and \$200 additional for a full page.

Ad Deadline: Wednesday, March 4, 2009

SW CROP Hunger Walk

The annual DC CROP Hunger Walk of 2-1/2 miles around SW streets is set for Sat. Apr. 25 from 10:30 am to 12 noon, starting at Christ United Methodist Church, 4th & I (Eye) St. SW Funds raised are distributed through Church World Service, 25% to local agencies, 75% to national and international organizations.

Churches or groups contact Corinne Scott, 202-484-3575, davicors@gmail.com or Linda DeLaine, 202-691-5774.

Census Bureau Hiring

The Census Bureau is taking applications now for workers for the 2010 census. Excellent work for retirees. Pay ranges from \$10 to \$22 an hour. Some work is at home. More information at 1-866-861-2010 or www.census.gov/2010censusjobs.

Howard U Study of Meditation

It has been known for centuries that stress contributes to high blood pressure and heart disease. In past years, dozens of scientific studies have shown that stress reduction with the Transcendental Meditation technique reduces stress and the high blood pressure that goes along with it.

But now, doctors at Howard University Hospital are asking the question, how does a mind-body technique such as Transcendental Meditation lower blood pressure in high risk African Americans?

This question will be answered in a new study funded by the National Institutes of Health. The clinical trial is based at Howard, in conjunction with the Institute for Natural Medicine and Prevention of the Maharishi University of Management in Iowa. Doctors are conducting tests to determine how the Transcendental Meditation program lowers high blood pressure and controls hypertension in middle-aged and older African Americans suffering from the malady.

Consequently, every Wednesday about a half dozen black men and women 40 and over gather in a room at the hospital where they are trained to meditate by professional teachers from a center in Rockville, Md. The group goes through 14 meditation sessions. A comparison group in the study receives educational sessions on ways to reduce hypertension. Blood pressure is monitored regularly over the 16 weeks of the study.

The hospital has just completed the first year of the three-year study, and is looking for additional participants. Participants must be at least 40 years old, African American and have high blood pressure. All subjects receive individual physiological testing and personalized instruction in lowering blood pressure without drugs. Telephone 865-5466.

Southwest Community Calendar February 16 - March 26, 2009

MON. FEB. 16 President's Day

WED. FEB. 18 AARP, 1311 Delaware Ave. SW, 12 noon

THURS. FEB. 19 Police PSA 104, River Park Coop, 1311 Delaware Ave. SW, 7 pm

MON. FEB. 23 SWNA Public Meeting, St. A's Church, 6th & M St. SW 7:30 pm

WED. FEB. 25 Ash Wed.

THURS. FEB. 26 NARFE, SW Library, 2 pm Note change of hour this month

TUES. MAR. 03 Police CAC, 415 4th St. SW, 7 pm

SUN. MAR. 8 Daylight Savings begins

MON. MAR. 9 ANC6D, St. Augustine's Church, 6th & M St. SW, 7 pm

TUES. MAR. 17 St. Patrick's Day

THURS. MAR. 19 Police PSA 104, Poto-mac Place Condos, 800 4th SW, 7 pm

SAT. MAR. 21 SWNA Public Election of Board Members, near Safeway, 10 am – 4 pm

MON. MAR. 23 SWNA Annual meeting, St. Augustine's Church, 6th & M St. SW, 7:30 pm

THURS. MAR. 26 NARFE SW Public Library, 3rd & Wesley Pl, 2 pm, Note change of time this month

WEEKLY, BI-WEEKLY

KOMEN TOASTMASTERS – First & Third Sat., S.W. Library, 10 am.

FIL-AM TOASTMASTERS – Second & Fourth Wed., S.W. Library, 6:15 pm.

SCHOOL ST. TOASTMASTERS – Every Tues., 400 Virginia Ave. S.W., Room 488 – noon.

WASHINGTON STAMP COLLECTORS CLUB – First & Third Wed., Christ United Methodist Church, 4th & I St. S.W., 7 pm 202-291-6229.

S.W. KIWANIS – First & Third Mon., Christ United Methodist Church, 4th & I St. S.W., 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

NEW SOUTHWEST TOASTMASTERS – Every Wed. GSA Bldg – 7th & D St. S.W., Room 5009 (inside cafeteria), noon.

LABYRINTH WALK – First & Third Wed., Westminster Church, 4th & I St., SW, 8-9:30 pm preceded by Yoga Nidra at 7:00 pm. on the first Wed. & Tai Chi at 7 pm on second, third & fourth Wed.

WEDNESDAYS AT 3 pm – Practice GED test – free – takes 4-1/2 hrs; walk in at SW Library, between 3rd & 4th St., between I (Eye) and K SW, second floor; picture ID required. 727-6976 or 727-1616 (M, T, Th, F).

SATURDAYS SAFETY WALKERS – meet for community walks at 800 4th St. SW., 5pm

WEDNESDAYS COMEDY NIGHT at Capitol Skyline Hotel, 10 I St., SW, 8-10:30 pm

FRIDAYS JAZZ NIGHT, Westminster Church, 400 I St., SW, 6-9pm

Please submit calendar items for March events to voice mail – 202-554-8560 or by email to thesouthwester@yahoo.com by Wednesday, March 4, 2009.

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Washington Nationals



Nats Players At Amidon-Bowen

By Naomi Mitchell

The Washington Nationals wrapped up their "Winter Caravan," with community appearances in the District. Seven players, mostly pitchers, visited Amidon-Bowen Elementary School in Southwest and participated in an assembly with the entire student body. The assembly was moderated by Nationals broadcasters Bob Carpenter and Charlie Slows with the assistance of Principal Almita Hawkins.

Nationals players John Lannan, Justin Maxwell, Garrett Mock, Mike O'Connor, Steven Shell, Josh Willingham and Terrell Young met the children as they entered the assembly hall with gifts of a red baseball cap, and after other introductions of special guests, the players took turns reading a story book with a theme of children making good

life decisions.

The Nationals announced a partnership with Everybody Wins, DC, the largest children literacy and mentoring organization in the Washington Metropolitan Area. The organization has nearly a one-on-one relationship with children attending Amidon-Bowen. The Nationals have committed to increasing the ranks of Everybody Wins! DC with staff volunteers from their organization for Amidon-Bowen students.

Following photographs of each class with the Washington Nationals players, 3,000 books were distributed by the Nationals as donations to the school through their partnership with The Heart of America Foundation. A number of parents were present and player autographs were collected by parents and students before the players departed.

Nationals Home Games Start Apr. 3

The Washington Nationals will play their first home game on Sat. Apr. 3 at 6:05 pm against the Baltimore Orioles.

The regular season opener will begin with Philadelphia at 3:05 pm Tues. Apr. 13, and games with that team will be at 7:05 Wed. & Thur. Apr 15 and 16.

Next to visit Nationals Park will be Florida, Fri. Apr. 17 at 7:05, Sat., Apr. 18 at 1:05 and Sun. Apr. 19 at 1:35. The Atlanta Braves will play Mon., Tues., and Wed. Apr. 20, 21, 22 at 7:05 pm., followed by St. Louis starting Thurs. Apr. 30.

St. A's Programs

Tuesday, February 24

Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras Pancake Supper at 7 pm.

Wednesday, February 25

Ash Wednesday at 12 pm and 7 pm Holy Eucharist w/ Imposition of Ashes.

Yoga at St. A's

Dates: March 11, 18 and 25; April 8, 15, 22, 29; then May 13.

Times: 6:30 pm to 7:45

Participants should be at least 18 years old. For prices and info contact the Church at 202-554-3222.

Honoring Thurgood Marshall

The church's "Diocesan Council" is forming an official Thurgood Marshall Task Force "to move forward with haste ...[to] insure that this diocese and all its parishes observe Justice Thurgood Marshall Sunday."

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From p. 1

moment of characteristic levity, she told us,

"I tell you, I don't believe in name calling, or people dropping names, but in the United States, except for first ladies, I do not know of another woman—I do not know one, but that doesn't mean one doesn't exist, but I don't know one—who has been kissed by three presidents in the same day. As George Herbert Bush and William Jefferson Clinton and Barack Hussein Obama passed, each one gave me a little peck."

Dr. Height gave us an excellent summary of her works and her entire life when she was asked what advice she would give young people today:

- You need to know something about our history and understand who, what, and how you are what you are and appreciate it.
- Don't get bitter. Start thinking about what you will do and who you will be, even in the face of injustice.
- Join with those who have similar goals
- Just because things don't change, don't stop, keep going and redouble your efforts. Use all your talents and thoughts, and keep moving.

Wonderful advice for all of us!

For the audio of the conversation between Dr. Height and SWNA Past President Thelma Jones at the SWNA meeting, visit the SW Blog website, www.swdcblog.com.

The recording comes courtesy of SWNA Board member Perry Klein.



Thelma Jones, Sue Klein, Dr. Dorothy Height at SWNA Meeting (photo by Perry Klein).



Left to Right, Paul Taylor (Treasurer), Kim Douglass (Secretary), Renee Jackson (Executive Director), Tony Macarty (Vice Executive Director)

Citizens Award

Volunteer officers for SW Comm-Unity Forum which sponsors SW Community Day in the summer at King Greenleaf Field received awards from the White House Office of the USA Freedom Corps and the President's Council. The criteria were at least two years, or 4,000 hours of volunteer effort. They earned a Gold Award from the President's Council.

Donate to Wilson High School

The annual Wilson Phonathon was held on Feb 1 - 3. Parents and community members can still contribute by contacting the co-chairs – Kris Holland:

krisholland@starpower.net

202 374-8527

Venecia White:

veneciawhite@hotmail.com

202 392-2172

The PTSA Phonathon is the biggest fundraiser for Wilson. This provides critical funding for extra classroom materials, grants to teachers, resources for the College and Career Center, funding for the Debate Team, sports teams and so much more.



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- Wednesday, February 11th 10:00-11:30am
- Thursday, March 12th 4:30-6:00pm

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AppleTree Early Learning PCS - Amidon

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Tel: 202.646.0094

AppleTree Early Learning PCS - Columbia Heights

2750 14th Street, NW

Tel: 202.667.9490



SWNA Candidates So Far

The report of the nominating committee will be given at the Feb. 23 SWNA meeting, at which time additional nominations will be taken from the floor for placing on the ballot for the Sat, Mar. 21 election near the front of the Safeway at 4th & M St. SW.

NAMES SUGGESTED SO FAR AT THE TIME THIS ISSUE OF THE SOUTHWESTER WENT TO PRESS WERE:

(These individual(s) and any others interested in running for a position should submit a bio of 50 words or less for inclusion in *The Southwester* by Sat., Feb. 28. Submit them to tjones15@verizon.net).

CANDIDATES SO FAR:

For President:
Carolyn Mitchell

For Vice President:
Peter Atlee

For Secretary:
(no one suggested)

For Treasurer:
Ellen Winship

For District 1 - North of M Street and West of 4th Street, SW (two representa-

tives)

Grace Daughtridge
Ahmad Nurridin

For District 2 – North of M Street and East of 4th Street, SW (two representatives)

Saadia Athias
Christopher Harris

For District 3 (South of M Street and West of Delaware Avenue, SW) – two representatives

Meg Brinckman

For District 4 (East of Delaware Avenue to and South of M Street, SW) – two representatives

Ken LaCruise
Reginald May
Vandana Sareen

(submitted by)
Thelma D. Jones, Nominating Chairperson (202) 488-3746
Tjones15@verizon.net

Rhonda Hamilton will chair the Elections Committee along with Ron McBee.

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Randall Appeal Settled— Arts Benefits Back on Track

By David Sobelsohn,
ANC6D Commissioner

In 2007, at a deep discount, the DC government sold the Randall Junior High School on I Street to the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The Corcoran promised to move most of its College of Art and Design into part of the school. Monument Realty planned to demolish the rest for a large apartment building.

The project's size and location concerned us on Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 6D. Not only would cars and trucks access the project through Delaware Avenue and H Street—two partly closed, narrow streets—but the project would cast shadows on our community's public swimming pool.

With the help of Councilmember Tommy Wells (D-Ward Six), in October 2007 our ANC negotiated a package of benefits from the Corcoran. Starting in its first year at Randall, the Corcoran promised it would organize an annual neighborhood arts festival, provide an annual community art project, grant special scholarships to ANC 6D residents, and recruit museum volunteers from the neighborhood, with each volunteer entitled to take Corcoran courses for free. The Corcoran expected to open Randall in 2011.

With our support, in January 2008 the Zoning Commission approved the Corcoran's Randall project. Under our agreement, the Corcoran began holding annual Randall Neighbor Days, on which all ANC 6D residents got into the Corcoran for free. The Corcoran designed posters to cover the Randall's windows pending construction.

Then the real-estate market crashed. In May 2008 the Corcoran asked the Zoning Commission's permission to speed up its Randall move to 2010. The Corcoran also asked to delay, until 2015, the apartment building—and the arts festivals, the scholarships, the art

projects, and the volunteers program.

Despite our ANC's unanimous opposition, last September the Zoning Commission approved the Corcoran's new timetable.

Under DC law, an ANC cannot itself go to court. But individual commissioners can. So in October, Commissioner Ron McBee and I, with our own money and a contribution from Commissioner Roger Moffatt, filed a court appeal of the Zoning Commission decision.

In the meantime, Monument Realty pulled out of the project. As this Southwester goes to press, the Corcoran expects soon to announce a new development partner.

Since we filed our appeal, we've met and corresponded with the Corcoran and its attorneys. Councilmember Wells and at-large Councilmembers Kwame Brown, Phil Mendelson, and David Catania have all helped.

Finally, on condition that we drop our appeal, the Corcoran agreed, on its next return to the Zoning Commission, to correct the record. Our new agreement makes clear that, if the Corcoran opens its Randall campus in academic year 2010-11, the Corcoran must—in that same year—start organizing an annual arts festival, giving us an annual arts project, awarding us scholarships and recruiting ANC 6D volunteers.

Under our agreement, the Corcoran must also give our teachers free museum memberships; give all ANC 6D residents Randall job preferences and free Randall meeting space; open a free Randall art gallery; erect a Delaware Avenue sculpture at H Street; and lead free tours, for our residents, of the Corcoran Gallery and of other art museums.

Our agreement could make the Corcoran's move to Randall the most important cultural development in our neighborhood since the opening of Arena Stage.

It can't come soon enough.



Left to right: Front row – Ruth Cuestas, Dr. Beryl Rice, Shawn Donnelly; 2nd row – Heidi Reidell, Kay Layne, Rick Braswell; 3rd row – Paul St. Hilaire, Thomas Walsh. Artists not in picture – Terry Parmelee, Oksanna Shemet, Tom Edes. Photo: By Perry Klein

Tiber Island Artists' Show

By Perry Klein

Tiber Island had the opening of their annual art show by Tiber Island artists on Feb. 6. The art show is Feb. 6-22 in the Lobby of the Tiber Island South building, 429 N St., SW. I think it's wonderful that we have this talented artist enclave in Southwest.



SW children in the Corcoran ArtReach program (Photo by Melissa Green, Coordinator of Community Studios)

Corcoran Class at St. A's

ArtReach celebrated the end-of-the-semester Student Showcase Exhibition at St. Augustine. The opening highlighted a wonderful fall semester. Jennifer Sakai, ArtReach instructor and site manager, led the students in a discussion about their work and their ideas of powerful people in their own lives and communities.

The exhibition displays a series of

portraits inspired by Avedon: *Portraits of Power*. The students used disposable cameras to depict their personal interpretation of power and transferred the portraits on to watercolor paper using the Polaroid transfer process.

The exhibition will be on display at St. Augustine through February.

Allen A. Flood, M.D.

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A gathering four days after the Presidential Inauguration of a small fraction of the people with tickets to the Purple Section of the Capitol lawn who had been stuck when they tried walking through the 3rd St. tunnel of Interstate 395, unable to reach their area because of the crowds. They called themselves "Survivors of the Purple Tunnel of Doom"

Inauguration Blues

"The Purple Tunnel of Doom" or "My Fifteen Minutes of Fame"

By Perry Klein

I was thrilled to learn, just a few days before the Inauguration, that my wife Sue would be receiving two tickets from her organization, the Feminist Majority Foundation, to view the swearing-in ceremony on the Capitol lawn, in the so-called Purple Section. Little did I know that our fate was to be trapped among the thousands of people caught in what has been referred to as "The Purple Tunnel of Doom."

My only involvement in the Inauguration was that my company, Washington Cable, was chosen to provide cable TV service to the several Presidential Inaugural Committees that had set up temporary offices in Southwest Washington. For me, Inauguration Day started when I was awoken around 4 AM by phone calls from the Inaugural Committees reporting that they had lost television reception. I had to come running, but had service back on-line within an hour after finding ice inside one of our microwave transmitters.

But back to the story. My daughter Sherry and I walked up our street, 7th St. SW to the Mall, but found it had been closed off so we weren't able to get to our assigned viewing area, which was on the other side of the Mall. We were told the only way to cross the Mall was to walk through the 3rd Street Tunnel. Never had we seen such a crowd of people! It was all we could do to get to the tunnel entrance at Washington Ave. & D St. SW to walk the northbound lane of the tunnel. When we got to the entrance we found literally thousands of people lined up for over a mile, all in the Purple Line. And it wasn't moving. We waited in line for over two hours. The line finally started moving, which we eventually found was because the Purple Gate had been closed, so those who hadn't got in with their tickets were leaving. We finally exited the tunnel at 3rd & D St. NW.

So we weren't able to get onto the Mall and had to miss the swearing-in ceremony. Nor were we able to see the Inaugural Parade; Pennsylvania Ave. was already filled with people and they weren't letting anyone even near the parade route. So, of course disappointed, we took Metrorail at the Gallery Pl. station at 7th & D NW to cross the Mall and walked home from L'Enfant Plaza. We heard the cannon-fire in the distance, and got back to our apartment just in time to hear part of President Obama's Inauguration speech.

It turns out there were a number of Internet-savvy people in the 3rd Street Tunnel.

Within a day or two, they had quickly formed a new site on Facebook, which they named "Survivors of the Purple Tunnel of Doom." By the weekend following Inauguration Day, already over 5,000 of us had joined and become members. It was soon suggested that we reunite on Saturday near the Capitol at noon and re-enact the swearing-in. We were urged to bring our laptops and i-Pods, pre-loaded with the swearing-in so that we could play it back on Saturday at noon.

That sounded like a neat thing to do, and I often jog along the Mall on weekends anyway, so I ran over there, not knowing how many people would actually show up. Someone had warned, on the Facebook page that if too many people showed up, the Capitol police might consider our gathering a "demonstration" and we might get into trouble for not having a permit. But when I arrived near the Capitol, I found we were almost outnumbered by TV and newspaper reporters eager for a story! After watching the replay of the swearing-in at noon on several laptops that a few of us had brought, I suggested we all get together to pose for group photos, which we did, and the next thing we knew we wound up on the evening news and our picture got in the Sunday Metro section of *The Washington Post*. So that's how I managed to get my "Fifteen Minutes of Fame!"

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Jefferson M. S. Sets Sights High

By Mr. Phelps, Jeff Math Teacher

Change is the watchword at Jefferson Middle School this year! With new leadership in place, a new grade level and exciting technology, Jefferson Middle has taken on a dramatically new direction that it hopes will catalyze dramatically improved achievement for its students.

The name change from Jefferson High School to Jefferson Middle School is the most prominent change. Having graduated its last 9th grade class in Spring 07, Jefferson Middle School's first 6th grade class began in Sep. 08. Taking on the 6th grade has presented its challenges; however, the school is hoping to reap the benefits of easing the transition to middle school for its newest students. Research has shown that this time is crucial to a student's future academic success.

Technology abounds throughout the school. With OCTO, the Office of the Chief

Technology Officer, sustaining a constant presence in the school, Jefferson hopes to move rapidly into the future of integrating technology into education. The Prometheus Boards, sprouting throughout the building, are one example – they represent the very latest innovation in education technology. By allowing instructors to create interactive lessons, the Prometheus Boards increase student engagement and consequently achievement. In addition, Jefferson Middle is hosting the Classroom of the Future which will utilize a variety of the latest education technologies.

A variety of other changes are in place or taking hold at Jefferson as staff, students and leadership take student achievement to new heights. The staff has refocused and re-ignited its professional development to create a more data-driven, learning culture that utilizes the very latest in education research to support its students. The efforts are in their infancy but seem to be showing early returns.

Youth Sign Up for Activities

The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) will sponsor several field trips over the next few months. Field trips will include the Thurgood Marshall Center and Ben's Chili Bowl (Shaw Community in NW), Freedom House Museum (Alexandria, VA), Newseum, National Museum of African American History and Culture, and a visit to a local hotel. Tours and guest speakers will be available at each tour site. Registration for each trip is \$5. Two to three chaperons are needed. All trips will be on Saturday.

In addition, YATF will sponsor Saturday classes in CPR and first aid for adults and children, ages 10 and above (venue to be confirmed). To sign up for these classes, please email or call Thelma Jones at tjones15@verizon.net or (202) 488-3746.

A second Safe Sitter (baby sitting) class is being scheduled for late March (date and venue to be confirmed). The class will be taught by newly-trained Instructor Cheryl Hansberry-Moore and Instructor Thelma Jones.

Completed and signed permission slips for youth are required for all activities and can be picked up and dropped off at King Greenleaf Rec Center. Please specify the activity on the permission slip. Registration cost for Safe Sitter, CPR and first aid training, which will be held on Saturdays, will be underwritten by YATF. Interested adults or students should email Thelma Jones at

Tjones15@verizon.net or call (202) 488-3746 to participate in the relevant activities.

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